United Nations A/57/444

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 October 2002

Original: English

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 21 (a) and (c), 36, 41 (a), 42, 43, 44, 52, 79, 84, 86 (a) and (d), 87 (a) and (f), 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 107 (b), 111, 112, 114, 116, 117 and 126

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations; assistance to the Palestinian people

The situation in the Middle East

Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session: implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS

Follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Questions relating to information

Macroeconomic policy questions

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade; high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

02-62540 (E) 161002

Environment and sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21; further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Operational activities for development

Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields

High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development

Globalization and interdependence

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination: comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

Improving the financial situation of the United Nations

Pattern of conferences

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Letter dated 23 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Ministerial Declaration adopted on the occasion of the Twenty-sixth Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 19 September 2002 (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would highly appreciate it if you could arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 21 (a) and (c), 36, 41 (a), 42, 43, 44, 52, 79, 84, 86 (a) and (d), 87 (a) and (f), 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 107 (b), 111, 112, 114, 116, 117 and 126.

(*Signed*) Milos **Alcalay**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Venezuela to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77

Annex to the letter dated 23 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, guided by the principles and purposes of the Unit Nations Charter and by full respect for the principles of international law, convened at the Twenty-sixth Annual Meeti at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 19 September 2002, adopted the following declaration:

1. We welcome the admission of the Republic of Palau as a full member of the Group of 77.

2. We pledge to work towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Group of 77 and China and, in this rega underscore the historic importance of the South Summit held in Havana, Cuba, from 12 to 14 April 2000. We underta to further mobilize the collective strength and solidarity of developing countries through strengthening South-So cooperation as well as enhancing the Group's negotiating capacity and its institutional effectiveness at vari international fora with the aim, inter alia, of fostering an effective North-South dialogue.

3. We reaffirm our commitment to the Millennium Declaration and call upon the international community to fu and speedily implement the provisions therein as well as those set out in major United Nations conferences and summ and their respective reviews, particularly those related to the promotion of sustained economic growth, sustainal development and poverty eradication. In this regard, we underscore the need to take concrete and immediate actions fulfil the commitments and achieve the goals contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the Monterey Consensus a the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Declaration on Sustainable Development so as to eradicate poverty, brid the gap between developed and developing countries, advance sustainable development and promote a fully inclusive a equitable globalization.

I. Global economic situation

4. We believe that globalization and the revolution in information and communication technologies pres opportunities and challenges for developing countries. While globalization and information and communicat technologies have the potential to stimulate economic growth and, if properly managed, could deliver hig living standards to people and improve social well being, we note, however, with great concern, that the econo problems that affect most of our countries constitute the major threat to our future stability and growth. financial and economic crisis we are presently witnessing is global in its causes and its implications. Its negat impact is being felt most severely by developing economies. This points to the need to improve the internatio financial, monetary and trade systems in a democratic and transparent way thereby ensuring the gre participation of developing countries.

5. We are fully aware that the benefits and costs of globalization are unevenly distributed, with develop countries experiencing special difficulties in meeting challenges, including poverty eradication, lack of finan resources and technology, digital divide, financial crisis, exclusion and inequality within and among societies.

6. We note with grave concern that the international economic environment continues to be unfavourable for developing world. We also note with concern the widening gap between the developed and developing countries and continued slowdown and uncertainties of the global economy and its consequences for the South. We, therefore, call for equitable international economic order and for measures to ensure developing countries participate in and benefit fr globalization, in particular through their full and effective participation in the process of decision-making aimed resolving world economic problems. We further call upon the leading industrialized countries to adopt timely a appropriate macro-economic policies and measures to increase economic growth and ensure greater global stability.

also call for a renewal of political will and of the spirit of international partnership in development and for the creation an enabling international economic environment and the adoption of effective measures in order to support develop countries' efforts to achieve sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the strengthening of th democratic systems while reaffirming the leading roles of national governments in the development process of e country.

7. We emphasize that there is a need to enhance infrastructure development in developing countries, which will s sustained economic growth. For this purpose, we urge the international community to create a dedicated multilate mechanism of international financing for the development of infrastructure in developing countries.

II. Role of the United Nations

8. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter international law as well as to the strengthening of multilateralism. We reiterate the importance of the Un Nations as the central forum for dialogue, negotiations and policy-making on issues relating to development international economic cooperation. We advocate a stronger United Nations system to effectively contribute the achievement of the development goals and objectives of developing countries.

9. We emphasize that the United Nations, the most universal Organization, must play a key role in internatio economic policy-making and global economic and development issues. We stress the need to further enhance coordination between the United Nations and the international monetary, financial and trade institutions. We a emphasize that the leading international trade, monetary and financial institutions must take into account the pol framework adopted by the United Nations and should ensure that their policies are in conformity with the developmer objectives of developing countries. We emphasize the need for trade, monetary and financial institutions to be reformed as to make them more responsive to the needs and concerns of developing countries.

10. We declare our firm resolve and commitment to strengthening the role of the United Nations in promotion of peace, security and development. In this regard, the right to development, a basic human ri should be given utmost priority.

III. Follow-up of the United Nations major conferences and summits

11. We stress the critical importance of follow-up to United Nations major conferences and summits held since 19 to ensure that the commitments, recommendations and measures agreed to at these conferences are implemented as so as possible. We note the significant achievements made by developing countries in honouring their commitmer However, we express concern that the efforts of developing countries to fully implement their commitments are hampe by the lack of provision of new and additional financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity building.

12. We welcome the outcome of the World Summit for Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, So Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, and call for its expeditious and balanced implementation. welcome the reaffirmation by the international community, through the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation the Declaration on Sustainable Development, of the importance of economic development, social developm and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development. emphasize that poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns and the protection of natural resource base remain the key requirements for the achievement of sustainable development. underscore that the implementation of sustainable development as envisioned in Agenda 21 and the outcome the Summit will require strengthened institutional mechanisms, enhanced cooperation between developed developing countries and strong political commitment by the international community. We therefore u developed countries and relevant major groups to fulfil their commitment to the full implementation of Summit outcomes and to the fulfilment of the targets and goals set.

13. We, while welcoming with great satisfaction the decision of the World Summit for Sustainable Development establish the World Solidarity Fund to contribute to the eradication of poverty and the promotion of human and soc

development in the developing countries, urge the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session to finalize the modalities for the operationalization of the Fund bearing in mind the role of Governments as well as civil society and the private sector in mobilizing resources for the Fund's programmes and activities.

14. We emphasize the need for the full implementation of the outcome of the World Food Summit: Five Years Later" held in Rome in June 2002, in the context of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals of halving, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and in efforts to eradicate poverty.

15. We acknowledge the special needs of small island developing States in the context of sustainable development. We therefore endorse the decision to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the sustainable development of small island developing States in 2004 in accordance with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

16. We reiterate the need to address the special needs and problems of the Landlocked Developing Countries. In this context, welcome the decision by the General Assembly contained in its resolution 56/180 to convene an International Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation in 2003 and fully support its effective preparation and organization.

17. We welcome the outcome of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa, in September 2001 and call for the implementation of its objectives. We commend the international community for recognizing that slavery and slave trade, colonialism, foreign occupation, genocide and other forms of servitude have manifested themselves in poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion and economic disparities. We reaffirm that all forms of racism and xenophobia as well as foreign occupation constitute serious violations of human rights, which should be rejected through all political and legal means. We also commend the Conference for having agreed on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a framework within which among others, remedial measures for redressing the legacies of these practices could be addressed and called for the formulation of similar programmes for descendants of slaves in the African Diaspora. In this regard we express our commitment to the accelerated implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference against Racism. We also emphasize the need for the establishment of complementary international standards to strengthen and update international instruments against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

18. We welcome the establishment by the General Assembly of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, land-locked developing countries and small island developing States, and call upon the international community to fully implement the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 and the Brussels Declaration adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries on 20 May 2001.

IV. Means of implementation: role of developed countries

19. We note that developing countries continue to make strenuous efforts to mobilize domestic resources for development. We, however, underscore that such efforts need to be supplemented by external resources, which should be provided without any condition, in order to effectively address their development requirements. We express our concern at the erosion of development cooperation and underline the need to reinvigorate it in order to address the new requirements of developing countries in the context of globalization and liberalization. In this context, we note the close linkage between the prosperity of developing and developed countries and the potential of developing countries as locomotives of growth. We urge developed countries to take concrete steps to mobilize new and additional financial resources and facilitate greater flows of FDIs as committed in the outcomes of UN major conferences and summits for the realization of this potential. We also urge the implementation of paragraph 44 of the Monterey Consensus concerning the proposal to use SDR allocations for development purposes.

20. We note with concern the continued and significant decline of official development assistance (ODA), which reached a low of 0.22 per cent of GNP, representing less than one-third of 0.7 United Nations target. We further reiterate the urgent need for a substantial increase of ODA and in this regard, we strongly urge compliance with internationally agreed ODA targets and with commitments for new and additional resources. In particular, we urge the developed countries to make concrete efforts to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of their GNP as ODA to developing countries as reaffirmed at the International Conference on Financing for Development, and effectively implement their commitment on ODA to the least developed countries as contained in paragraph 83 of the programme of action for LDCs for the decade 2001-2010. We further urge developed countries to make available the increased ODA commitment announced at the International Conference of Financing for Development and reaffirmed at the World Summit for Sustainable Development to the implementation of sustainable development objectives as set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

21. We express regret that despite several initiatives undertaken over the past decade by the international community, the debt crisis persists as one of the main constraints for the development of developing countries, including middle-income countries. We reiterate the urgent need for the international community, particularly the developed donor countries and international financial institutions to adopt an effective, comprehensive and equitable, once-and-for-all development-oriented and durable solution to the debt problems of developing countries, including debt cancellation and increased concessional financial flows for all developing countries, as well as through debt for sustainable development swaps. In this regard, we welcome the decision reached in Monterrey for future determinations of debt sustainability to also include consideration of a country's ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

V. Trade and development

22. Trade is one of the most important sources to foster development. A universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as well as meaningful trade liberalization, can substantially stimulate development worldwide. Therefore it is essential to place the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of the WTO agenda and facilitate the accession of developing countries to the WTO on fair and reasonable terms, taking into account the particularities of each country. We stress the importance of enhanced and predictable market access for products of export interest of developing countries, through tariff reductions, the removal of tariff peaks and escalations and the elimination of trade-distorting policies, protectionist practices, non-tariff barriers and agricultural subsidies. We also express concern over the high incidence of anti-dumping measures and reiterate that they should not be used for protectionist purposes.

23. We call for the full and faithful implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements and emphasize the need to address expeditiously the implementation issues and concerns of developing countries. Regarding the implementation of existing WTO agreements and decisions, we emphasize the need to address in particular the difficulties and resource constraints that developing countries face in fulfilling their obligations under those agreements and decisions. We further call for the strengthening of the special and differential provisions in favour of the developing countries to make them more precise, effective and operational. We also call for the review of the Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) and Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreements from a development dimension with a view to minimizing any negative aspects of these agreements on the development of developing countries.

24. We further reiterate the important role that UNCTAD has to play in helping developing countries to integrate into the world economy in areas of special interest such as investment, enterprise development and technology, trade, in goods and services, commodities and services infrastructure for development and trade efficiency. In this regard, we call for taking concrete steps to strengthen UNCTAD and its capacity to assist developing countries in trade and development-related issues, including through the provision of new and additional resources, and in the implementation of the Doha work programme.

VI. Operational activities for development

25. We underscore the importance of the role of the United Nations in Operational Activities for Development. We call on all developing countries to effectively participate in the work of Executive Boards of the United Nations Funds and Programmes. We stress the need to ensure that the funding for operational activities for development is placed on a

predictable, assured and continued basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries including through channeling a portion of the ODA pledged in Monterrey for the operational activities of the United Nations. In this regard, we express concern at the withholding by one major donor of their contribution to the core resources of UNFPA. We reiterate that the reforms of the United Nations, and decisions taken by the United Nations funds and programmes, including in the context of funding strategies, must safeguard the essential characteristics of United Nations operational activities, which are universality, neutrality, impartiality, multilateralism, voluntary and grant nature, and responding to the needs of developing countries in a flexible manner. In this context, we reiterate the role of national governments in establishing the priorities in their respective countries as well as their central coordinating role. While noting the efforts of the Funds and Programmes to generate extra resources from the donor community, we stress that such resources can only complement the centrality of core resources provided by donor countries. Furthermore, such resources should be mobilized in accordance with the agreed priorities and should not be, in any manner, subject to preconditions which distort the mandates set by the General Assembly and other respective governing bodies. Moreover, we call on agencies, funds and programmes to take effective steps to fully utilize the South-South modality within their programmes of assistance. We also urge them to increase the procurement of goods and services from the developing countries.

VII. Situation in Palestine and the Middle East

26. We remain gravely concerned over the tragic and dangerous situation in the occupied Palestine territory, including Jerusalem, which has resulted in the grave deterioration of the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people, and has negatively affected stability and development in the region as a whole. We call for the immediate and complete cessation and end to settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan an end to the recent Israeli occupation and siege of Palestinian cities, towns and villages, which are in violation of international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, and all forms of collective punishment against the Palestinian people, as well as the return to the negotiation table. We also call for the immediate Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and from the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967, and from all the other Arab occupied territories. We reaffirm our support to the Palestinian people in their effort to achieve their inalienable rights, including their right to establish an independent state on their national soil, including Jerusalem. We also call for an end to Israeli violations of Lebanese sovereignty and territorial integrity.

27. We reaffirm our support for the Middle East peace process started in Madrid in 1991, and aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace. In this context, we support the peace initiative adopted by the Arab Summit in Beirut in March 2002.

VIII. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

28. We welcome and fully support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Lusaka in July 2001 which is a holistic and integrated development initiative for the economic and social regeneration of Africa.

29. We stress the urgent need to follow through on the declarations of support from the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union and the G-8, to assist Africa to implement NEPAD.

30. We welcome the adoption of the UN Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) by the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on 16 September 2002.

IX. South-South cooperation

31. We recognize the increased relevance and importance of South-South cooperation in the current international economic climate. We, therefore, reiterate our support for South-South cooperation both as a strategy in support of the development efforts of the developing countries and as a means of enhancing participation of developing countries in the emerging global economy.

32. We invite the Administrator of the UNDP and the Executive Board to strengthen the TCDC Unit as the United Nations focal point for South-South cooperation through the preservation of this separate identify and the provision of adequate resources to ensure the full implementation of decisions of the South Summit under the sphere of competence and to enable it to carry out its relevant mandates and responsibilities.

33. We reiterate our strong commitment to fully implementing the outcome of the South Summit held in Havana, Cuba, from 10 to 14 April 2000. Regarding the status of the implementation process of the South Summit outcome, we reiterate our firm commitment to speed up the implementation process in the sphere of competence of each chapter. We welcome the progress made so far in the implementation process despite lack of resources and call upon member States to contribute generously to the special fund established in accordance with the provisions of the Havana Programme of Action in order to facilitate the implementation process.

34. We reaffirm the importance of the implementation of the Havana Programme of Action and follow-up of the South Summit and, in this context, reiterate that the ad hoc open-ended working group establish during its twenty-fourth annual meeting should continue to function as a mechanism of regular reviewing and monitoring of the overall process. In this regard, we reiterate the need to effectively and speedily revitalize the work of this group.

35. We reiterate our firm commitment to further strengthening South-South cooperation, taking into account the proposals set out in the Havana Programme of Action. As stressed by the South Summit, South-South cooperation is increasingly important, both as a strategy in support of development and as a means of ensuring the effective participation of developing countries in the emerging global economic order. We believe that there is a need to consolidate ongoing efforts, to further increase resources, and to identify priority areas for South-South cooperation, especially in the field of regional and sub-regional economic cooperation, including inter alia the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. These priority areas should be included in the cooperation among developing countries to enhance their understanding of complex global economic, environmental and social issues and to formulate joint strategies. We are very confident that the 11th session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on ECDC (IFCC-XI) to be held in 2003 in Caracas will be a major event and an excellent opportunity to establish those priority areas for South-South cooperation as well as to reassert developing countries' solidarity and their desire and ability to act together.

36. We stress the importance to developing countries of access to science and technology in order to promote their economic growth and sustainable development. We, therefore, underscore the need for developing countries to participate in, benefit from, and contribute to, the rapid advances in science and technology, including in the area of environmentally sound technologies, new and emerging technologies, including biotechnology, information and communication technology (ICT) and safe drinking water technologies. In this context, we welcome the generous offer made by the United Arab Emirates to host the South-South High-level Conference on Science and Technology in Dubai from 27 to 30 October 2002 in accordance with the Havana Programme of Action, and we call on developing countries to participate actively at this Conference in order to formulate a South-South platform for the promotion of science and technology in the South.

37. We stress the crucial importance of the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP) as an instrument for promoting South-South cooperation and trade in this context. We recall the decision of the Havana Summit to consider further deepening and expansion of the GSTP in order to enhance its effectiveness, as well as to review the implementation and the performance and impact of the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries. We request UNCTAD to continue its support for the operations of the GSTP Agreements.

38. We approve the Financial Statement of the ECDC Account of the Group of 77 (G-77/AM(XIV)/2002/4). We express concern over the precarious financial situation of the ECDC Account and the fact that since the Havana Summit only 26 countries have paid their contributions in full. In this context, we appeal to all member States of the Group of 77 to contribute generously to the ECDC Account as decided by the South Summit in order to support the implementation of the annual programme of work of the Group of 77 and to ensure continuity of the smooth functioning of the Office of the Chairman.

39. We approve the report of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) (G-77/AM(XIV)/2002/2), which was presented in accordance with the guidelines for the utilization of PGTF. We note with satisfaction the progress made so far by the PGTF in support of South-South cooperation projects and call upon all members of the Group of 77 as well as the United Nations system to support the expansion of resources of the Trust Fund. We commend the Chairman of the Committee of Experts for his continued commitment and leadership in the Fund's activities.

X. Other major issues and developments

40. We welcome the proposal for the establishment of an international humanitarian fund, mindful of the ideas expressed on the issue during the International Conference on Financing for Development and at the World Summit for Sustainable Development.

41. We recall that HIV/AIDS is a major challenge for developing countries. We believe that the response to the epidemic should be based on an integrated approach of prevention and treatment policies. We urge the international community to contribute new and additional resources to initiatives in the area of health, including the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Efforts should also be carried out to provide access to and affordability of medicines including anti-retroviral drugs in line with the Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and public health, adopted at the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Doha.

42. We firmly reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterate the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. We emphasize that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. We, therefore, call on the international community neither to recognize these measures nor apply them.

43. We express our grave concern over the impact of economic sanctions on the civilian population and development capacity in targeted countries, and therefore urge the international community to exhaust all peaceful methods before resorting to sanctions, which should only be considered as a last resort. If necessary, these sanctions must be established only in strict conformity with the Charter of the United Nations with clear objectives, a clear time frame, provisions for regular review, precise conditions for their lifting and never be used as a form of punishment or otherwise to exact retribution.

44. We call upon the international community to minimize the adverse effects of United Nations economic sanctions on third parties. In this regard, we emphasize the responsibility of targeted countries to fully implement the provisions of all relevant Security Council resolutions.

45. We call upon the international community to provide the necessary assistance to landmine clearance operations, as well as to the rehabilitation of the victims and their social and economic integration into the landmine affected countries. We express concern over the residues of the Second World War in particular in the form of landmines which cause human and material damage and obstruct development plans in some developing countries. We demand that the States responsible for laying the mines outside of their territories assume responsibility for the landmines, cooperate with the affected countries to get rid of them and to contribute defraying the cost of clearance and provide compensation for any ensuing losses and for reclaiming the affected

areas for productive purposes. In this context, we express support for the demining assistance in the south of Lebanon.

XI. The financial situation, administrative and budgetary issues of the United Nations

46. We note the improvement in the financial situation of the Organization and express concern that there are still considerable outstanding contributions and arrears.

47. We reaffirm the legal obligation of Member States to bear the expenses of the Organization in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the requirements to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time and without conditions. While recognizing the need to extend sympathetic understanding to those that are temporarily unable to meet their financial obligations as a consequence of genuine economic difficulties, we urge all others, in particular the major contributor, to pay their assessed contributions unconditionally, in full and on time.

48. We reaffirm that the principle of the "capacity to pay" is the fundamental criterion in the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations. We stress that the special difficulties faced by some developing countries should be fully taken into account and that the decisions of the General Assembly on the agenda item "Scale of assessment" must be responsive to such difficulties. We stand fully committed to support the requests of these developing countries.

49. We encourage the promotion of an intergovernmental dialogue in order to explore measures to improve the financial situation of the Organization that can have a positive impact. In this regard, we stress that any attempt to change the current methodology of calculating the arrears under Article 19 of the Charter that could adversely affect a large number of developing countries, is not desirable and should be discouraged.

50. We express concern that internal cross-borrowing from the peacekeeping budgets to finance the regular budget continues to put undue financial difficulties on the developing countries that provide troops and equipment. We also express concern at the late and irregular reimbursement to developing countries that provide troops and equipment to various active and liquidated peacekeeping operations, which is due to the non-payment of assessed contributions by some Member States.

51. We reaffirm that all mandated programmes and activities of the Organization should be adequately financed in order to ensure its full implementation. In this regard, we expect that in the decisions to be taken during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the regular budget 2002-2003, the outline for the next budget 2004-2005 and other related budgetary issues, the demands and areas of concern of the Group of 77 and China should be adequately and effectively addressed.

52. We express concern at the inadequate share of the developing countries in the United Nations system of procurement. We emphasize that the United Nations procurement should be on as wide a geographical basis as possible with preferential treatment for the developing countries. We further underline that the United Nations supplier roster should be representative of the membership of the Organization.